

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, May 25, 1995

Published Since 1877

Teacher models missions giving in life and death

BURGAU, N.C. (BP) — Mary Taylor cared more about others than she did herself.

The daughter of a Southern Baptist preacher, Taylor never married. Instead, she devoted her life to her church and community.

But more than anything else, she devoted herself to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the world — in life and in death.

"Mary Taylor was a very gentle lady who had a real compassion for people," said Francis Chesson, pastor of Burgaw (N.C.) Church, where Taylor was an active member for most of her adult life. "She wanted us to be sensitive to the physical and spiritual needs of people here in our own back yard, but she also always held our feet to the fire as far as missions was concerned."

Taylor's first love was children. Her small, wood-frame, white house stood just a block from the Burgaw school, where she taught first grade for about 40 years. Her door always was open to neighborhood children who wanted to visit or play a board game.

"Mary loved children. You could see it in the way she spoke to them," said Margaret Harrell, her next-door neighbor and long-time friend. "Occasionally, she would give the children's sermon at church. They would just sit there spellbound and listen to her."

When mandatory retirement forced her to leave the classroom in 1969, Taylor devoted her time to the community. She delivered meals to the homebound, taught in a literacy program sponsored by the Wilmington Association, and volunteered at the local hospital. There she ran errands, gave direc-



Mary Taylor

tions, and did other chores even when her own health began to fail.

Taylor also cared about principle and conscience. Gary Trawick, her attorney and executor of her estate, told the Foreign Mission Board, a recipient of her generosity over the years.

She gave up income from a building leased to a grocery store — refusing to renew the lease — when its management decided to sell alcohol. She was one of the first teachers to volunteer for service in a black school when North Carolina schools were integrated in the 1960s. And when she remembered an injustice she had committed against a student, she ran a public apology in the newspaper — even though the slight was 60 years old.

She also paid for a standing newspaper ad that read: "Anyone wanting to know how to become a Christian, contact Mary Taylor." Over the years, the ad grew larger.

Perhaps the most striking thing about Taylor, however, was her love of missions.

"Mary always wanted the church to do the right thing when it came to missions," Chesson said. "She was always encouraging us to increase the missions budget and the missions offerings."

In fact, Taylor refused herself basic necessities so she could have money to meet mission needs, said another neighbor, Jewell Harrell.

"Mary loved mission work, and did without, so she could give to missions," Harrell said. "She wouldn't spend money on her house; the door swung large enough you could throw a cat through it. She went around with holes in her shoes, but she kept a metal box with money in it for gifts to others."

If the church wasn't meeting its goal for a mission offering, she always gave extra to reach it. When a young woman in the church couldn't afford to take a volunteer mission trip to Brazil, Taylor wrote a check to pay her airfare and expenses.

Despite her modest means, Taylor gave \$27,000 to the Foreign Mission Board in the last 10 years of her life. Those gifts were above and beyond her tithe and local offerings.

And when she died one week short of her 89th birthday more than a year ago, her friends and family weren't surprised to discover she left her entire estate — about \$115,000 — to Southern Baptist mission work in Mexico.

"I'm constantly gratified by the number of people who include the Foreign Mission Board in their wills," said David Coleman, FMB

director of development. "And I'm humbled by the lifestyle they live to fulfill the commitments they have made to the Lord. Mary Taylor lived simply and sacrificed her own comforts to provide more money for the Lord's work."

Although no decision has been made about how the entire gift will be used, some of the money will meet one urgent need for video projectors, said Joe Bruce, FMB administrator for work in Middle America.

In rural areas of Mexico, video projectors can be used effectively to share the gospel for

the first time with large groups. Mexican Baptists hope to start 2,000 new churches by the year 2000, and 10 video projectors would greatly help them reach that goal, Bruce said.

But at \$4,000 apiece, the technology had been out of reach. Taylor's gift will offer thousands of Mexicans their first opportunity to hear the gospel and will help start many new churches, he said.

Coleman's office provides resources for people who want to include mission causes in their wills. For more information, call 1-800-362-1322.



MBREA elects officers

Officers recently elected to lead the Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association include (from left) president Joe Armour, minister of education at First Church, Clinton; president-elect Jeff Ingram, minister of education and youth at First Church, Wiggins; secretary-treasurer David Webb, minister of education and youth at Union Church, Picayune; first vice-president Robin Nichols, Annuity Board Representative for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; and second vice-president Jackie Winters, director of preschool and children's ministries at Ridgecrest Church, Madison. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

To fund or not to fund?

The University of Virginia's decision not to provide funding for a campus Christian newspaper while paying for Jewish and Muslim activities has drawn both ire and support from religious groups around the country, and the U.S. Supreme Court is scheduled to settle the issue next month. The Christian newspaper, **Wide Awake**, was founded in 1990 and promptly recognized by the university, but school administrators balked at funding the newspaper through mandatory student activity fees that provide money to such organizations as the Jewish Law Student Association, the Muslim Student Association, and a publication called **The Yellow Journal**. Complicating the issue is the university's murky distinction between cultural groups (funded) and religious groups (not funded). **Wide Awake** supporters appealed through university and court system channels to no avail. The case wound up before the Supreme Court in March. The Baptist Joint Committee in Washington, D.C., supports the university; the Christian Life Commission in Nashville supports the newspaper.

Modern preaching

Today's preaching must be relevant to society while avoiding the latest "pop psychology dipped in the Bible," warned a noted Southern Baptist preaching instructor. Craig A. Loscalzo, associate professor of Christian preaching at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., said an understanding of contemporary society is necessary for pastors to reach their congregations. "You have to be able — Sunday after Sunday after Sunday — to theologically understand what's going on in the world and be able to go to your congregations with a word from God," to help church members "make sense out of their anxiety" in the modern world. "Take some time to evaluate what you're doing, evaluate the cultural issues going on in your church," he urged. Preachers should ask themselves if their preaching is "carrying the gospel in all its richness," he said, rather than offering "five easy steps to whip up better sermons." Loscalzo said he has developed a more narrative approach over the years to his preaching. "Fortunately, our model for this is the gospels themselves."

Looking Back...

10 years ago

Grady Crowell, Clarke Association director of missions, leads 11 Clarke County Baptists in conducting simultaneous revivals in churches across Ohio. He reports 48 people prayed to receive Christ during the revivals.

20 years ago

The largest graduating class in the history of William Carey College in Hattiesburg hears Mississippi U.S. Senator John C. Stennis admonish them to "hold on to faith and confidence in their nation, in themselves, and in their God."

50 years ago

Chester Swor, long-time English professor at Mississippi College and Southern Baptist youth leader, receives an honorary doctor of humanities degree from Baylor University during the Texas Baptist school's 100th commencement.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

Has the WMU been deprived?

We were encouraged, at first, to see Foreign Mission Board (FMB) President Jerry Rankin's effort to affirm the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU). The WMU needs to be affirmed by the entire convention. Their only "crime" is the desire to be what they have always been — an auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

They have been made to feel uncomfortable at Conventions, Executive Committee meetings, and now by mission board executives.

Rankin has declared he "doesn't feel they have been deprived of anything." Apparently many WMU organizations across the nation feel they have been deprived. It's like the doctor telling you that you don't hurt anywhere.

In 1992 John Jackson, a California pastor serving as FMB trustee, accused the WMU of "spiritual adultery" because they would dare consider supporting Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) missionaries. There were few SBC

leaders who deplored this statement. Jackson was never censured nor, to my knowledge, did he ever apologize for the insult.

Shortly thereafter Adrian Rogers, former SBC president, said the WMU needed to be "hot wired" into the SBC. Then there were constant rumblings from Nashville of new women's organizations within the Baptist Sunday School Board or other agencies. The WMU must be wondering who their friends are now.

The Program and Structure Study Committee (PSSC) politely asked the WMU if they wanted to join the SBC as an agency, allowing the SBC to select their trustees and administrative officers. Then they used the WMU's refusal to say the WMU will not cooperate; therefore, we have no assignment for them.

What a pity the PSSC was not around in 1888 when the SBC had doubts about letting women be involved in anything. In 1918 women finally were able to vote in national political elections. Gra-

ciously the SBC reversed its decision of 1885 and permitted women to serve as messengers. Suppose the women had decided earlier to come under the protective umbrella of the SBC.... Would they be as the Brotherhood today?

The WMU started as an autonomous auxiliary and has made it known... they will continue as an auxiliary. The PSSC knew well what the answer would be, but it went through the motion of asking the question. The WMU has been bullied by the SBC for the last decade. During that time it has continued to teach and promote SBC missions — not to mention the millions of dollars it has raised in our churches for missions.

There are thousands of Southern Baptists and hundreds of missionaries who salute the WMU for its stand. Hopefully we who constitute the SBC will come to the realization that the WMU is worth more as an auxiliary than two or three new women's organizations controlled by men.

Guest Opinion...

Rewards of remembering — as a nation — our heritage, our families

By Bruce Fields

I enjoy remembering! Many of us do. We all have our own ways of aiding our memory. Maybe it is a date circled on the calendar. Perhaps it is a post-it note placed in a prominent place or a string tied to a finger.

Nations have ways of remembering, too. National monuments are built to remind us of days gone by and the heroes who made those days significant. This is how it should be because we tend to forget too soon, too easily.

I will never forget the day in October 1985 when I first set foot on the soil of Arlington National Cemetery. Row upon row of gleaming white crosses reminded me that our freedom is not cheap nor is it easily kept. It is fitting that such stones be placed to the memory of those to whom we owe so very much. Those stone crosses stand for something very important. They are there to help us remember, and remembering certainly has its rewards.

Yet for many individuals the most valuable spot of real estate is one eight feet long and four feet wide, set off perhaps on a quiet hillside, where the mortal remains of a loved one are buried. On certain days, family members and

friends who are like family go to that place and spend some time remembering. This is not a morbid time; rather it is an honest time as long as the heart is not left at the cemetery.

This past year I returned to southwest Mississippi — to Mars Hill Baptist Church, where my grandparents worshipped. There, down behind the church building, I saw again the peaceful place where my grandparents were buried. The tombstone reads:

*George and Bessie Walker
Married 64 Years
"Then Sings My Soul
How Great Thou Art"*

As I stood there, a flood of memories descended upon me. I treasured special moments of time we had spent together. But even more, I remembered their lives. For every word of wisdom, every bit of example, and every amount of influence they shared, I was immensely thankful! I saw a stone monument that day that revived my memory of two very special people who had helped to shape my life.

There was a man who is mentioned in the Bible who also remembered as he stood near a pile

of stones. His name was Joshua. He was the leader of the Hebrew people after Moses had passed from the scene. He had participated in the stormy events that came before the entrance of the children of Israel into Canaan and he knew how hard it had been. He also remembered how God had been with them through it all!

Joshua felt his people needed a solid, tangible monument to remind them of God's goodness and leadership in bringing them safely into the Promised Land. He instructed his men to build a stone monument that would help the people experience the rewards of remembering.

On this Memorial Day, let us take some time out of our busy holiday weekend and enjoy the rewards of remembering. Let us remember that special person who has gone on before us. Let us accept and apply the truths that were taught to us. And let us so live our lives today so that we can also teach by our words and actions and attitudes — long before we die.

Who knows? Perhaps some special day, somewhere near a quiet hillside, someone will remember us!

Fields is associate pastor of pastoral care, First Church, Gainesville, Ga.

"IS OUR CHURCH OPEN TO ANIMALS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS?"



THE FRAGMENTS

Monday blues

Ever feel like bragging about the size of your church? The following statistics will not help you much.

Recently, David Yonggi Cho, pastor of the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea, was visiting in London. *The Baptist Times* reported on the current size of Cho's church: now over 700,000 members. The church has seven services on Sunday in the main sanctuary and 10 overflow chapels, seating 31,000 for each service.

The church has 748 pastors, nearly 68,000 deacons and deaconesses, and 28,000 home cell groups. Their services are broadcast on radio and television all over Korea and most of Japan. They support 330 missionaries in 41 countries.

In his spare time, Pastor Cho has written 80 books. About 12,000 (a small cell) turned out to hear him in London.

Did I tell you about the day we hit 100 in Sunday School at Mt. Zion? — GH

Don't "Christianize" society, be like early church instead

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (ABP) — Instead of trying to "Christianize" society — so that being a good citizen is equated to being a good Christian — contemporary churches should seek to emulate the congregations of the New Testament, said church growth expert Loren Mead.

In churches during the Apostolic (New Testament) age, "there were little differences vocationally between laity and clergy — everybody was a missionary," Mead, director of the Alban Institute in Washington, D.C., told about 150 Baptists attending a conference on "Transforming Ministry for the Future" in Winston-Salem, N.C.

A major shift occurred when Christianity became the "official" and "only tolerated religion of the

land," Mead said. "You were literally born into the faith," he continued.

Today, as home communities are increasingly recognized as a mission field, churches need to return to a New Testament model where lay people serve as "missionaries" and professional clergy as "the coach or encourager," he said.

"We must return to the apostolic task of the church — that is to turn out apostles into the world, not trap them inside the church building," Mead said.

The conference, held March 20-22, was sponsored collectively by Baptist state conventions in North Carolina and Virginia, North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Pilot Mountain Association, and the Home Mission Board.

The Baptist Record

VOLUME 119 (ISSN-0005-5778) NUMBER 16
Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$7.35 per year plus \$1 postage increase (total: \$8.35) payable in advance. Second class postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Southern Baptist Press Association.

Editor.....Guy Henderson
Associate Editor.....William H. Perkins Jr.
Editorial Associate.....Florence Larrimore
Circulation Manager.....Renee Walley
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Baptist Record Advisory Committee: Grady Collins, Philadelphia; Robert Self, Brookhaven; David Raddin, Yazoo City; Charles Dunagin, Summit; Carl White, Clarksdale; Billie Buckley, Petal; Betty Smith, secretary.
Postmaster: Send changes of address to THE BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. Send news, communication, and address changes to The Editor, BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205 (601) 968-3800.

FMB puts trademark application on hold until meeting with WMU

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Putting on hold an application to trademark the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin said May 18 the matter first will be discussed with leaders of Woman's Missionary Union.

The Southern Baptist mission agency's application for a trademark was called into question by Virginia WMU's executive board May 13. The FMB trademark application with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office was initiated in July 1994 and, beginning May 26, was to begin a 30-day public review period.

The application to trademark

the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, which raises more than \$80 million annually for FMB work, "was a responsible business decision" first suggested by legal counsel in 1990, Rankin said in a May 18 statement released to news media, "and there was no intention of offending or neglecting the Woman's Missionary Union. We are deeply sorrowed and regret that we have offended the WMU, which fills such a strategic role as a partner in missions education and promotion."

Rankin reiterated his intention to maintain FMB-WMU ties, stating, "We are excited about what the future holds for both the WMU

and the Foreign Mission Board as we work together to lead Southern Baptists to be on mission with God."

Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director, issued a statement May 18, responding, "We are pleased with this action. When a Christian brother asks for forgiveness, you give it. The details will have to be worked out later. This is the first step toward a fuller understanding of this unfortunate incident."

"To WMU, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is not just an offering, but a symbol of the commitment of WMU to the sharing of the gospel around the world," O'Brien continued. "To remove that representation from us is like removing something of our heart. We are grateful for the acknowledgement and understanding of Dr. Rankin to the depth of feeling about this issue

in the hearts of WMU members." WMU began the offering for Foreign Mission Board causes the same year WMU was organized, in 1888, renaming it the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering in 1918.

According to the FMB, the trademark application was filed in July 1994 after concerns arose over unauthorized use and distribution of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Nobles ruled unable to stand trial; federal judge orders treatment

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Former Mississippi College president Lewis Nobles will be returned to a federal prison hospital for continued treatment after U.S. District Judge William H. Barbour Jr. ruled May 17 in Jackson that he is incompetent to stand trial on a 21-count indictment accusing him of taking donations intended for the Baptist-affiliated school in Clinton.

Barbour, apparently acting on evaluations he ordered while Nobles, 70, was treated for two months at the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Mo., wrote, "The defendant is found incompetent to stand trial insofar as he suffers from a mental defect, in consequence of which he presently is unable to understand the nature and consequences of the proceeding against him and is unable to advise and consult with his attorneys and otherwise properly assist in the maintenance of his own defense."

Barbour also wrote that he was issuing his decision on the belief that further treatment may result in Nobles' improvement "to such a degree that he may be found competent to stand trial."

No time frame or scheduled treatment was released. Nobles could be placed in the Missouri facility or a similar hospital in Butner, N.C., said Al Jeanneret, chief deputy U.S. Marshall in Jackson.

Nobles has been held without

bond in the Madison County Jail, which has a contract to house federal prisoners, since his return from the Missouri prison hospital on May 3. He is recovering from an apparent attempted suicide Jan. 26 when FBI agents with a fugitive warrant closed in on him at an upscale San Francisco hotel.

The warrant was issued by Barbour after Nobles failed to appear for a Jan. 26 pretrial hearing, scheduled prior to his Feb. 7 trial on charges that he allegedly diverted to his personal use about \$1.7 million in donations intended for the college.

After he didn't show up for the hearing, FBI agents tracked his automobile to the Memphis International Airport, where he had allegedly booked a flight to San Francisco.

Nobles collapsed as FBI agents searched his hotel room and was rushed to a San Francisco hospital where he underwent two emergency surgeries. He allegedly swallowed a poisonous substance when FBI agents knocked on the hotel room door.

While recuperating in the San Francisco hospital, Nobles suffered what his physician son-in-law, Ben Nash of Clinton, described in a recent court hearing as "metabolic encephalopathy," or changes in the structure of the brain.

Nobles was transferred to the Missouri prison hospital after doctors in San Francisco released him.

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Mississippi Baptists still helping in wake of flood

Mississippi Baptists continue in disaster response with child care work in New Orleans following May flooding from up to 22 inches of rain within 48 hours.

The child care unit of the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force began May 17 at an American Red Cross claims office set up at the Rosenwald Recreational Center just off South Broad Street near the Mississippi River.

Team member Dixie Kennedy of Wesson said they were caring for about 60 children a day for up to two hours at the time while their parents applied for federal assistance.

"We're rocking babies, changing diapers, putting on band-aids — anything that comes up," said Kennedy.

"Some parents have asked what we're getting paid," said Kennedy. The answer is a witness: "We aren't doing it for pay. When people are in need, this is our way of ministering to them and sharing the love Jesus has for us," said Kennedy.

Child care crew members, staying at night on campus at New Orleans Seminary, have included:

— May 17-21: Donna Swartz, Magee; Ellen Johns, Mendenhall; Margaret Deer, Tylertown; Yvonne Martin, Tylertown; and

Chuck Johnson, Jackson.

— May 20-24: Bobby and Dixie Kennedy; and Nella Duckworth, Wesson.

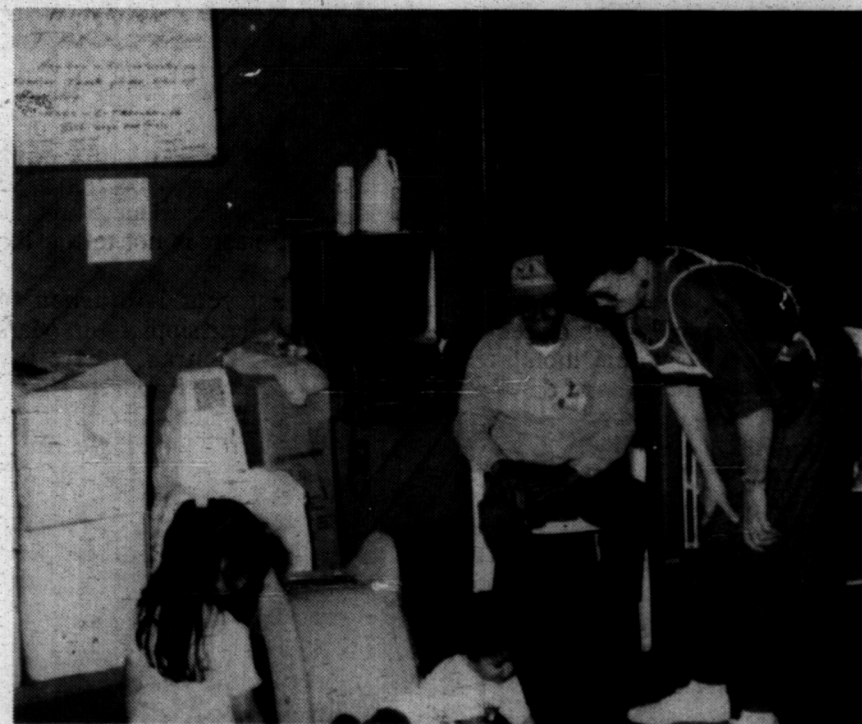
— May 24-26: Joan Tyler, Collins; Peggy Huey, Hattiesburg; Yvonne Martin; and Margaret Deer.

Crew chiefs have been Steve Griffin, Bogue Chitto; and Ron-

nie Ferrell, Isola. William Wright of Goss will be crew chief for May 24-26.

The Enterprise Church unit of the disaster relief group, a self-contained cooking unit, served 600-1,200 hot meals per day out of Woolmarket Baptist Church, Biloxi, on May 13-19.

(See related article on page 4.)



Bobby Kennedy (seated) and Nella Duckworth (right), both of Wesson, entertain children at the Rosenwald Recreation Center in New Orleans as part of the WMU's disaster relief efforts.

Mississippi Baptists go to Venezuela, formalize partnership

Venezuela Baptists and missionaries, representatives of the Foreign Mission Board, and Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) representatives met in Caracas, the country's capital, May 2-6.

The purpose of the meeting was to finalize plans for a partnership between Baptists in Mississippi and the South American nation from 1996-99, with a possible one-year extension beyond that time.

Mississippi Baptists' partnership with Zimbabwe will conclude this fall. Current partnerships are with Alaska, Colorado, and Honduras.

Hipolito Avila, president of the National Baptist Convention of Venezuela, said of the partnership effort: "Our responsibility is to win Venezuela. I get very emotional about this. God loves our nation. Your help (Mississippi Baptists) is needed and appreciated. The Holy Spirit has been in this meeting. We have a unity and we have felt his presence. This is the wish of my heart for all of Venezuela."

"Baptists here and in your country always live looking into the face of God," Avila continued. "We have great plans on paper, but it is essential that we live the Christian life. The Lord can bring us together and

prayerfully bring our nations together. Take this burden with you. Pray about it."

"Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it," Avila concluded.

Eugene Dobbs, MBCB Ministry Office director, responded to Avila's charge, declaring that Mississippi Baptists are "willing to respond to your request to pray, to challenge our people, and enlist the teams to assist you where we can."

Paul Harrell, MBCB's Brotherhood Department director, said, "We will use all our resources to fill the requests where we can, and challenge our people to respond to this need."

Marjean Patterson, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, indicated the women of Mississippi are ready and willing to do their part in the work in Venezuela.

Priorities for the partnership effort were emphasized: 1) Evangelism, training and development, and construction; 2) Prayer partners; and 3) Medical work.

The theme for the partnership is: (in Spanish) "Venezuela y Mississippi unidos en la Gran Comision" — "Venezuela and Mississippi united in the Great Commission."

(See related items on page 4.)

Baptists help New Orleans area after rain of "biblical proportions"

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — When rain starts falling in May, New Orleans residents wince — and with good reason.

They know what heavy rains can do in a city already below sea level at many points. They also know how often those heavy rains come in May. Indeed, for more than a decade, New Orleans floods have been measured by events of May 1978.

Now, however, the city has a new standard.

"A rain of biblical proportions" was how the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* newspaper reported events. "This was like a 500-year storm," one article noted. "It's as bad as it gets," an area leader said.

It is certainly hard to imagine how it could have gotten much worse. As it was, the New Orleans area bore the brunt of a rare storm system that combined torrential rains, high winds, even some tornadoes. And it all came quickly, without warning, stranding motorists and residents, forcing some to scramble to high ground and roofs, forcing others to abandon cars and swim to safety. A photograph in one newspaper showed a motorist standing in

water almost to the shoulders. The outline noted the motorist was standing not on the ground but on the roof of a car and was soon forced to swim to safety.

Meanwhile, other graphics showed the extent of the rain that inundated the area. Many areas reported up to seven inches of rain in a three-hour period and more than twice that much in a six-hour span. Overall, some areas of New Orleans saw more than 17 inches of rain fall from the system. Other areas, just miles away, say only a couple of inches fall. After a second wave of rain swept through the area, the two-day rain totals topped 20 inches in the Slidell area. At the Slidell airport, the total was more than 23 inches in two days.

All in all, it was enough to

affect hundreds of thousands of the 1.6 million people who live in the metropolitan area, leaving six confirmed deaths, 12 parishes declared federal disaster areas, an estimated 33,000 homes damaged, more than 13,000 automobile insurance claims (with leaders expecting 7,000 more in upcoming days). It required \$2.6 million in Red Cross relief funds expended and brought in 568 workers to the area.

Leaders estimate damage will total more than \$3 billion across the region.

Louisiana and Tennessee Baptist disaster relief units have moved into the New Orleans area. Child care units from Arkansas, Mississippi, and Texas are also operating in the New Orleans area.

(See related article on page 3.)



Bible Drill champ

Jim Young (second from left) is Mississippi's 1995 State Bible Drills champion. The member of Hope Church, Philadelphia, was named winner April 29 at Alta Woods Church, Jackson, at the end of the record-setting tournament season. Young will represent Mississippi Baptists during Discipleship Training Week July 15-21 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Assembly. **Heather Martin** (third from left) member of Maybank Church, Hattiesburg, was runner-up to Young. She will represent Mississippi Baptists July 1-7 at Glorieta (N.M.) Assembly. **Ashley Horne** (right), member of Friendship Church, North Central Association, was chosen as alternate. Finalists included Adam Lee, New Hebron Church, New Hebron; Nicole Nicholson, Linwood Church, Union; Meg Harper, Stanton Church, Fayette; Christina Curd, Barton Church, Lucedale; Lee Peoples, Navilla Church, McComb; and William Waldrop, West Heights Church, Pontotoc. The finalists will be part of a special demonstration Bible Drill July 6-8 at Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian. Wes Pegues (left) is youth consultant with the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which sponsors the tournament.

What is a Partnership?

Venezuela and Mississippi — through the efforts of the Foreign Mission Board — have been invited to join in a partnership mission effort (see related article, page 3).

The agreement will likely be formally approved by the Mississippi Baptist Convention at its annual meeting in November and by the Venezuela Baptist Convention in January 1996.

Teams of workers in evangelism, medical work, construction, and special events (drama, sports, puppetry, etc.) are requested to go to Venezuela during the three-year partnership. Venezuela Baptists will come to Mississippi to work in areas of evangelism, youth camps, Spanish-speaking congregations, and special events.

Bill Hardy is Mississippi's partnership mission coordinator.

Venezuela facts

- A republic located on the northern edge of South America between the Caribbean Sea and the equator.
- Seven times the size of Mississippi; 1,700 miles of coastline.
- Has the largest lake in South America (Maracaibo); Orinoco River is the third largest in South America.
- There are 72 islands off its coast; Margarita is the largest.
- Three-fourths of the 22,000,000 population live in five major cities: Caracas, Maracaibo, Valencia, Barquisimeto, and Coro.
- Population's average age is 28.5.
- There are 15,000 Baptists and 62 SBC missionaries.
- Ecological systems range from tropical forests to mountains.
- Spanish is the main language.



Venezuela Baptist Convention President Hipolito Avila and Executive Secretary Jacobo Garcia take a break in their meeting with Mississippi Baptists at the Emanuel Baptist Church in Caracas.



A girl in the Venezuelan village of Santa Teresa celebrates her birthday.

Sunday School Dept. offers training sessions for Bible Club/Bible School workers

Adults and youths who will teach in Neighborhood Bible Clubs or Mission Vacation Bible Schools this summer are encouraged to attend training sessions June 3.

The simultaneous workshops, sponsored by the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), will be held at five churches across the state from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. The workshops will focus on use of curriculum materials and promotional ideas.

Locations and leaders for the sessions are: First Church, Ridgeland, Evelyn Vaughn and Monica Ivey; First Church, Laurel, Mimi Allen and Sandra Nobles; Colonial Hills Church, Southaven, Judy Haney and Joy Whitehead; First Church, Louisville, Linda Reeves and Cindy Sansing; First Church, Long Beach, Grace Graham and



Allen



Vaughn



Ivey



Reeves



Nobles

Liz McGraw.

There is no fee for the workshops; no meals will be served. For more information, contact Larry Salter, consultant for the MBCB Sunday School Department, at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Caracas, capital city of Venezuela, has a population of 7 million — more than twice that of the State of Mississippi.

Kenya gunmen shoot, rob Baptist missionary couple

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP) — Jo Scales, a Southern Baptist missionary in Kenya for 25 years, was seriously wounded May 21 by gunmen who sprayed the vehicle she was driving with automatic weapons to force the car to stop.

The men shot through the doors and windows. Several bullets were deflected by the doors and others punctured the roof and windows on trajectories that indicated they passed within inches of Scales, from Shreveport, La., and her husband Louie, from Lubbock, Texas.

Her right leg was shattered by one of the bullets and, according to doctors, she will probably require a bone graft to bridge a one-inch gap in the femur presently held in place by a metal plate. She also was wounded in the left leg and on the right hand.

"I'd say she's in stable but still serious condition," Sam Turner, administrator of the Baptist Mission of Kenya, said. "She's fully alert but there's a real danger of infection, blood clots, and other complications." Since surgery she has been in a "high dependency unit" of Nairobi Hospital.

Around 5 p.m. on May 21, the Scaleses were returning to their home in Embu, Kenya, after a mission committee meeting in Nairobi. About one hour north of the Kenya capital, a car began to tailgate them. The car then pulled alongside them and the men brandished guns.

When the Scaleses did not stop immediately, the men opened fire, shooting out both rear windows and the front window on the driver's side and shooting holes in the front windshield, both right doors, and the door post on the left side. One gun had a banana clip on it

and the other appeared to be an Uzzi, the Scaleses said.

They ordered both missionaries out of the car but when Mrs. Scales collapsed they concentrated on Scales, ripping his pockets to grab his money. The thieves then fled in their car.

Within minutes Kenyans working in nearby fields, who heard the shooting and Mrs. Scales' screams, came to their aid, bandaging wounds and lifting her into the back seat of the Scales' car.

In a state of shock Scales drove the approximately 40 miles straight to Nairobi Hospital and found the emergency room staff standing by.

Unknown to him, friends from Meru had witnessed the robbery from their car and had driven to a telephone to call the hospital.

Another Kenya missionary, Marcia Richardson, was at Nairobi Hospital and saw Scales drive up. She alerted Turner and within 30 minutes five Southern Baptist missionaries with the proper blood type were at the hospital to give blood.

Missionaries who saw the car marveled at near misses — some bullets were deflected by seemingly too-thin sheet metal; other bullets had traveled on a trajectory that seemed to be en route to the Scaleses in the head or chest.

Carolyn Madison, retired MBCB consultant, dies

Carolyn Madison, 87, retired consultant in the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), died of cancer on May 21 at Whispering Pines Hospice in Jackson.

Funeral services were held May 23 in the chapel of Wright and Ferguson Funeral Home in Jackson, with graveside services at Brookville (Miss.) Cemetery.

The Brookville native was a school teacher in Utica and Philadelphia before moving to Jackson in 1940 to become preschool and elementary Sunday

School consultant with MBCB. She retired from that position in 1973 after nearly 33 years of service.

In her farewell to Mississippi Baptists upon her retirement, she said, "My prayer is that some of the seeds sown (the littlest boys and girls) will spring up and bear fruit. I'll be careful to give all the praise to God, for I know that without him, I could not have done anything."

Madison taught Vacation Bible School for 58 consecutive years and was a volunteer at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson. She was a member of Parkway Church, Jackson, and Sunday School teacher there since 1940.

Survivors include two nieces, 10 great nieces/nephews, and 10 great great nieces/nephews.



Madison (file photo)

Sunday School lesson commentary writers begin their duties June 29

Three Mississippi pastors will begin new duties June 29 as writers for the weekly Baptist Record Sunday School lesson commentaries.

Bob Rogers, pastor of First Church, Poplarville, will write the Life and Work series commentaries.

Rogers, a Petal native, is a graduate of Mississippi College, Rogers with the bachelor of arts degree, and New Orleans Seminary, with the master of divinity and doctor of theology degrees.

He was licensed to preach by Sunrise Church, Petal, and ordained by Woodville Church. His previous pastorates include: Ft. Adams Mission, Woodville; Union Church, Roxie; Calhoun Church, Taylorsville; and Calvary Church, Gloster.

In addition to his writings for The Baptist Record, Rogers

writes a weekly column, "The Good News," published in the Lumberton Booster and the Poplarville Democrat. He and his wife Mary have three children.

Larry McDonald, pastor of Castlewoods Church in Brandon, will comment on the Bible Book series of lessons.

The series commentary will be McDonald the second recent writing McDonald has published with The Baptist Record. His article, "Angel Fair not so heavenly," appeared as a guest opinion in the March 2 issue.

McDonald, 38, is a Jackson native. He is a graduate of Mississippi College, and holds the master of divinity in pastoral ministry from the International School of Theology (Campus Crusade for Christ). He is currently completing his doctor of ministry in leadership dissertation



McDonald

under the Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson.

McDonald formerly served Cruger Church in Holmes County and County Line Church in Rankin County. He has pastored the Castlewoods congregation for five and a half years, and is adjunct professor of philosophy at the Rankin campus of Hinds Community College.

He and his wife Tina have three children.

Phillip Andrew "Andy" Brasher Jr. will write on the Uniform lesson series. He is pastor of the Como Church.

Brasher holds the doctor of ministry degree from Bethany Theological Seminary in Dothan, Ala. He also holds the master and bachelor of arts degrees from the University of Memphis.

He was dean of students and assistant professor at Rutledge College, Memphis; and former public relations coordinator/academic counselor and adjunct professor at Crichton College, Memphis.

Brasher and his wife Wendy have two children.

Thursday, May 25, 1995

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Encouraging chaplaincy

Albert Holmes (left), director of institutional and business-industrial chaplaincy at the Home Mission Board (HMB) in Atlanta visits in the Baptist Building in Jackson with Bill Jones (standing), state coordinator for the Mississippi Baptist Chaplains Association, and Richard Brogan (right), consultant in the Missions Extension and Associational Administration Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. For more information on chaplaincy programs, contact Brogan at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Crisis Pregnancy Center plans dinner, education

The Crisis Pregnancy Center of Jackson will host a barbeque dinner at the Agriculture and Forestry Museum on Lakeland Drive in Jackson, beginning at 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 1.

The center is supported by a number of Southern Baptist churches in the Jackson area and includes Southern Baptists on its board of directors, according to Barbara Beavers, the center's executive director and wife of the pastor of Jackson's Covenant Church.

Featured speaker at the dinner will be Pam Stenzel, public relations director for Alpha Women's Center and a board member of Robbinsdale Women's Center, both crisis pregnancy centers in the Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn. area. She is also an accomplished vocalist and holds a degree in clinical psychology from Liberty University.

Tallahatchie and Grenada join to form North Central

As of April 24, Grenada and Tallahatchie associations have merged into a new association: North Central Association.

In separate called meetings, the two associations voted by overwhelming majority to join efforts and combine to form North Central Association.

North Central will operate out of the newly-purchased offices for the former Grenada Association in downtown Grenada. Future plans include the operation of satellite offices in Tallahatchie County. Tallahatchie Baptists' 50-acre camp, Lakeside Baptist Assembly in extreme southeastern Tallahatchie County, will also serve as a central meeting place and retreat

Stenzel founded Straight Talk, an organization aimed at educating teens on issues of sexuality and promoting chastity.

"Her message will target adults who work with youth to educate them on how to talk with teens about sex. She believes in the whole truth about sex, not the half-truths young people hear from our culture," Beavers said.

The Jackson center has been open since 1988 and has counseled over 5,200 women in crisis pregnancy situations, Beavers pointed out.

The center is currently helping about 150 clients per month with counseling services, practical help, referrals, maternity/baby clothing and furnishings, and adoption information, she added.

Tickets to the dinner are \$10 per person. To make reservations by May 30, call (601) 352-1123, or (601) 956-5373.

for the association.

Under the guidance of an appointed steering committee, the association will be gradually phased into existence over the next 18 months. With 33 churches and a budget of nearly \$100,000, the association will be able to accomplish ministries that were heretofore impossible.

Since both Grenada and Tallahatchie associations had lost their directors of missions (DOMs) to retirement, no one currently serves as DOM for the new association.

All communications for the two former associations should now be directed to: North Central Association, 1045 Fairfield Ave., Grenada, MS 38901.

The encouraging professor...

Ray Robbins, longtime educator, mentor, retires

By Guy Henderson

Ray Frank Robbins has been the senior professor/visiting scholar in the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Mississippi College in Clinton since 1981. Prior to that time, he taught New Testament at New Orleans Seminary for 29 years. He also taught at Samford University in Birmingham, pastored churches, and taught numerous Bible conferences in the U.S. and Europe. Thousands of students have walked through his classroom door and have experienced a blessing and have been encouraged. Barnabas ought to be his middle name.

Robbins is a 1940 graduate of Mississippi College (MC) and finished his master of theology and doctor of theology degrees at Southern Seminary in 1945. Two years of service as a Navy chaplain in the Pacific area enhanced his concern for students.

He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and has also studied at Oxford University, University of Zurich, University of Basel, and the University of Alabama.

He also served as pastor of East-side Church, Jackson, and Providence Church in Yazoo County while studying at MC. Through the years, as he continues to do now, he has served as interim and supply pastor in numerous churches. He still continues to teach weekend Bible conferences in the churches,

as he has done for 49 years. An example of this is that since January, in addition to teaching three courses each semester at MC, he has conducted 12 Bible conferences of three-four days each in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama. In addition he has written five books and numerous articles.

Now that the school year is over, he and his wife Eugenia will leave for teaching assignments in Colorado, Washington, and Florida.

His wife Eugenia Evans Robbins served as professor (adjunct) in the graduate division of the Department of Psychology and Counseling at MC, and has a private practice of counseling.

Robbins retired this month and **The Baptist Record** requested an interview:

BR: You've been in many schools and had a lot of professors. Who are the professors who really made an impact on your life?

M.O. Patterson, Bible professor at MC, inspired me to want to teach. I was a young student and he really impressed me. At Southern Seminary William Hershey Davis and Gaines Dobbins were great friends and great teachers. Dobbins asked me to be his fellow, but I had already decided on New Testament and Dobbins taught Religious Education. In Edinburgh William Manson and James Stewart

were some of the best teachers I ever had. Stewart especially was kind and gracious, and I had the privilege of being in his home several times. He was one of the best preachers I ever heard.

BR: What are the greatest changes you have seen in our seminaries?

I think in the past the seminaries were more open to discussion and the freedom of research. Scholarship was emphasized in a peaceful atmosphere. There was little stress, and it was a good time for students and teachers. I fear today it is more of an indoctrination, and really free discussion is not encouraged. The "party line" is too much in evidence today.

BR: You've taught many books on doctrine; which doctrinal study is needed most today?

The priesthood of the believer. This is the foundation stone of Baptists. Each person is competent to go to God and each person is responsible in his service to God. This is why Baptists started and it is still a distinctive in need of observing. I pastored a church while in England that was organized in 1482. Since 1607 it has been a Baptist congregation and is the oldest continuous Baptist church in existence. This is what they stressed. No priest needed — every believer has access to God. There has been an erosion of this doctrine. Our rights come from being a Christian, not from an ecclesiastical organization.

BR: Has the culture always influenced the church?

Yes, the culture and politics. Through history this has greatly influenced the movement of Christianity and can still be seen today. Usually what is seen in political life is often mirrored in the churches. There is an infusion of culture into the church and sometimes this can be confused with the actual doctrines of the church.

BR: What books have been most helpful to you?

After the Greek New Testament, of course, *A Man in Christ*, by James Stewart. I may not agree with all of it but it is a great study on the daily infusing or the uniting of God in us. Then George Curtius'

Principle of Greek Etymology (2 volumes) is a great discussion of faith. It is a beautiful picture of words and illustrations related to our faith. "Christ in you" is mentioned about 164 times in the New Testament. This is important.

BR: What are the crucial issues the church is facing today?

The lack of dedication to the teaching of our Lord. So many church members have a shallow relationship with the church or with Christ. The tendency is to become spectators and not ministers. There is no provision made for a non-ministering minister and every believer is a minister. This is why the early church made such an impact on the pagan world. They were possessed with the idea of serving, reaching out.

BR: Say a word about your personal devotional life and preparing for all you do.

Well, to me prayer is essential and preparation is vital. Even after teaching for 49 years, I see preparation as being foremost. At MC I prepared every lesson as if I had

never taught it before. I am constantly reading and re-reading.

BR: Can you share a word for young preachers starting out today?

Between high school and college I visited George W. Truett and told him I was entering the ministry. "A call to preach is a call to prepare" was his word of wisdom. Many problems in the churches today are because the preacher is not prepared. He is not prepared socially, religiously, economically, and in so many ways. God can call any person, male or female; his Spirit came unto "all flesh" and men and women were prophesying — which is inspired preaching. Don't try to limit what God can do. just get prepared.

BR: Tell us of your retirement plans.

I certainly expect to continue to preach, write, and lead conferences, so it is not a retirement to do nothing. We will move to our home at Route 1, Box 132-F, St. Joseph, LA 71366, and just let things develop from there.



Eugenia and Ray Frank Robbins

NOBTS North Ga. Campus planning pioneer interactive video mode of study

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) officially dedicated its new North Georgia Campus May 15.

Located on Columbia Drive in Decatur, the 6.5-acre property and 50,000-square-foot buildings are a gift from the members of Columbia Drive Church. Church members voted Sept. 11, 1994, to give their property and facilities to New Orleans Seminary. On Sept. 13, 1994, seminary trustees voted unanimously to accept the gift.

Renovations and equipment expenditures on the part of NOBTS

now make the value of the property approximately \$5 million.

Principle speaker for the occasion was Landrum P. Leavell II, interim president of New Orleans Seminary. Leavell expressed gratitude to Columbia Drive Church for the gift of property and facility, where church members continue to hold regular services. He also thanked Nelson Price and the Roswell Street Church for the 15 years they served as host for the NOBTS North Georgia extension center.

The Nelson Price Communica-

tion Center was dedicated at the ceremony. It houses state-of-the-art compressed interactive video (CIV) equipment. Through the use of multiple cameras, microphones, and large-screen monitors, students at the North Georgia Campus can interact in person and in real time with professors and classmates on the main campus.

New Orleans is the first SBC seminary to implement CIV technology.

The seminary began offering classes at the new facility in January. Current enrollment is 337.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

My wife criticizes every attempt I make to discipline our children, so three weeks ago I quit correcting them at all. Now she's mad at me about that. What can I do?

There appears to be something that is preventing you and your wife from understanding what each other expect when it comes to parenting. Her criticism is a red warning flag that something is not right. Have the two of you taken time to examine how each of you was disciplined when growing up? What are your dreams and goals for your children, and how does discipline help you achieve those dreams and goals? In most families, one parent tends to be a stronger disciplinarian while the more permissive parent appears to pamper the children and lets them "slide." This causes difficulty for the parent who expects stricter adherence to the rules of the household. *How to Be a Hero To Your Kids*, by Josh McDowell, is an excellent book. If you cannot come to an understanding with your wife, talk with a marriage and family therapist to try to reach a consensus between the two of you.

I am constantly suspicious that someone will steal my wife,

especially since I took her from her first husband. How do I cope with that feeling?

Such a feeling is not uncommon when we do something we know to be wrong; it is the consequence of submitting to the urges of the sin nature. The first action to take is to ask your Heavenly Father's forgiveness for your misdeed, and then ask your wife's forgiveness. The next action that will bring some relief to your discomfort is to ask forgiveness from your wife's first husband. This will be difficult, but it will:

— release you from the burden you feel over this situation.

— release her first husband from resentment—he may be harboring.

You are not responsible for her first husband's reaction to your request for forgiveness, but you are responsible for yourself. Asking his forgiveness doesn't mean you are trying to escape your role in this or avoid the consequences. It means you want to be free of the shame and heaviness you feel. These actions will bring about the trust you seek and help remove your suspicions. This will be a long process but well worth the freedom you'll feel when you clean the slate.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: In time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

Letters to the editor

Plea for inclusion

Editor:

I am sure there is an uneasy feeling about now sinking into the pits of the stomachs of the employees of SBC agencies as the study committee appointed by the SBC Executive Committee recommends the elimination and consolidation of their agencies. It is also easy to perceive a strong sense of frustration coming from the offices of the WMU in Birmingham as their role is minimized by the committee report. The study committee has offered both bold and impressive changes to fine-tune our convention efforts. These actions have, however, alienated and confused many Southern Baptists due to the SBC Executive Committee's lack of sensitivity to the value of existing agencies.

Why did the SBC Executive Committee ignore the wisdom and insight of current agency leadership in proposing such a major restructuring of our Convention? What women's group does not want to be affiliated with the WMU, and why? Will the Sunday School Board now begin to saturate our churches with "Women's Ministry" materials, further excluding and belittling the time-proven efforts and publications of our faithful WMU? The problem is a process which excludes rather than includes wise and faithful servants. The problem is appointment rather than election. The problem is there is not even enough time scheduled by the SBC Executive Committee in our annual convention meeting to discuss normal business concerns of pastors and churches, much less time to address a major convention overhaul.

My plea is that we first restructure the study committee before we attempt to restructure our Convention. For a study

impacting the entire SBC, we need to include representatives from every walk of Southern Baptist life, including the WMU.

Dale Little
Director of Missions
Adams-Union Association

Founders' intentions

Editor:

It is quite interesting to see the lack of knowledge that abounds concerning the purpose of educational institutions from their founding. Many people have grown so accustomed to the secularization of America that the principles upon which it was founded have been totally ignored or have been outright falsified by the secularists and American Civil Liberties supporters of contemporary society.

Many people use the First Amendment as the grounds for their espousing secularism, yet this was not the intent of the Founding Fathers who wrote the First Amendment. The First Amendment was not written to eliminate God, morality, and biblical precepts from the educational system, but to keep the federal government from establishing one single denomination as being the national denomination or religion of America. They did not want the problems that came from the Anglican denomination being designated as the national denomination/religion in Great Britain.

The Founding Fathers were thoroughly committed to the principles of the Bible being taught in the classroom. Gouverneur Morris, one of our Founding Fathers, speaking 173 times on the floor of the Constitutional Convention (more than anyone else), was one of the most active and respected members of the Constitutional Convention. He was the penman of our Constitution, and he stated that religion is the only solid

basis of good morals; therefore, education should teach the precepts of religion, and the duties of man towards God.

Whenever a territory applied for statehood the Congress would review their submitted state constitution to make sure that it was not repugnant to the principles of the Founding Fathers. In 1817, Mississippi's state constitution proudly declared that religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government, the preservation of liberty, and the happiness of mankind, schools, and the means of education shall be forever encouraged in this state. The Founding Fathers would not even let a territory petitioning statehood become a part of the United States unless their educational system taught religion and morality in their schools along with knowledge. It should also be noted that their idea/definition of religion meant religion as taught in the Holy Bible.

The depths to which a nation would fall was also a big concern of the Founding Fathers. Their admonitions concerning an America that would reject biblical teaching and morality in schools has lamentably come to pass as they predicted. They fought so bravely to see America established on a biblical foundation. We must pray, and move out in peaceful yet stalwart ways to see our nation reclaimed for its heritage.

Edward Baxter
Oxford

Calling all cadets

Editor:

The Baptist Student Union at the United States Air Force Academy would like to contact the men and women coming to the Academy June 28 and 29 to begin training as basic cadets. For those arriving June 28, we will meet them at the airport, provide free

lodging, meals, and transportation, and take them to the academy at the appointed time. We would also like to meet those coming on June 29 and provide them transportation to the academy. This is an opportunity to meet smiling faces and make new Christian friends before beginning basic cadet training. If pastors, parents, relatives, friends, or new cadets will contact us with name, address, and telephone, we will correspond with them to secure flight arrival times and provide further information.

Please contact us at 550 W. Woodmen Rd., Colorado Springs, CO 80919; telephone (719) 599-9094. Also, for anyone attending West Point or the Naval Academy, similar ministries are provided. At West Point, contact: Bill Blackwell, 29 Sheldon Dr., Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY 12518; telephone (914) 534-3944. At the Naval Academy, contact: Tom Clemmons, 210 Hanover St., Annapolis, MD 21401; telephone (301) 263-0963.

Dwain Gregory, director
Baptist Student Ministries
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Correction, please

Editor:

Please note two errors, that I am certain are inadvertent, in the "Editor's Notebook" of the April 27 Baptist Record:

First, the editorial statement is: "The (Executive) Committee now handles and divides about \$140,000,000 Cooperative Program funds."

The correct statement is: The Southern Baptist Convention divides the Cooperative Program funds in annual session and the SBC Executive Committee handles them according to the action of the SBC and according to the Business and Financial Plan of the SBC.

Second, the editorial statement is: "Now the Baptist Foundation, assuming the restructuring is approved, will bring about \$158 million of trust funds under the control of the Executive Committee."

The correct statement is: The Executive Committee will have responsibility for investment management and distribution of \$158 million of trust funds that are controlled by donor intent, assuming the restructuring is approved.

I know that you will want to correct these statements so the readers will know they were inad-

vertent errors and not attempts to mislead.

Ernest E. Mosley
Executive vice president
SBC Executive Committee

Humanism creeps in

Editor:

In response to Billy Philley's (May 11) letter concerning the absence of any reference to Jesus Christ in his niece's seventh-grade history book, I would like to urge him not to wait until his kindergarten-age daughter brings home a history book to find out what she is being taught.

When my youngest son was in the first grade, I discovered that he was being taught values clarification (a humanistic method of choosing one's own values) through a book on "manners." I tried to sound an alarm to the public school establishment, but to no avail. As soon as I was able to do so, I placed my son in a Christian school and began teaching at home his older brothers (who, I discovered, were also being taught various forms of humanism in the public schools).

I believe our Baptist churches need to seriously consider providing Christian schools for our members' children and insuring that the curriculum is distinctly Christian — not just transporting humanist curricula to a Christian setting.

Georgia Wilkinson
Greenville

Two information bits

Editor:

I would like to commend you for your column "Looking Back..." (on page 1) in the May 4 edition of *The Baptist Record*. In the part "50 years ago," [you stated] that Friendship Church, Kreole, had more than tripled its membership and that the church was debt-free after less than one year after being organized.

I would like to add a bit more information about that church. My dad, Jewel S. Golmon, was pastor at that time and was a participant in its organization. Thank you so very much for recognizing the work done there.

I would like to address my next comments to Michael Johnson, writer of the Life and Work Sunday School lesson [commentary] entitled, "Changing directions" on May 4. The lesson in general was well-stated. I do take issue with the choice of words in the last paragraph beginning "In real life..." That statement implies that everything written before was not real life and was just a story. I fear that there are already too many people who believe the Bible to be just a story. We can't emphasize enough the reality of the events of the Bible. A better choice of words would have been: "Today..."

Dianne G. Roberts
New Hebron

workshop training opportunity for workers in Neighborhood Bible Clubs/ Mission Vacation Bible Schools

Saturday, June 3 — 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.



Sandra Nobles

FBC, Ridgeland
FBC, Laurel
Colonial Hills, Southaven
FBC, Louisville
FBC, Long Beach

Evelyn Vaughn, Monica Ivey
Mimi Allen, Sandra Nobles
Judy Haney, Joy Whitehead
Linda Reeves, Cindy Sansing
Grace Graham, Liz McGraw



Linda Reeves



Evelyn Vaughn

Purpose of the workshops: to introduce BBC/MVBS materials and provide hands-on training for youth and adult BBC/VBS workers.

No registration required. No meals will be included.
For more info, call Larry Saffer at (800) 748-1651/(601) 968-3800



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Just for the Record



GAS from 27 churches' in Lincoln Association recently enjoyed a mother-daughter banquet at Fair River Church, Brookhaven. Theme for the evening was "Love in Any Language." The group of 280 was entertained by Blo Pop and company clowns (Cal McIntire and friends, above).



Star Church (Rankin) recently broke ground for its new building. The church's previous facilities were lost to a fire in February 1994. Albert Brock is chairman of the building committee; Vic Bowman is pastor.

East Louisville Church will host a "God Bless America" rally on June 2 at 7 p.m. Sonny Holland, evangelist, and gospel singers Tony Gore & Majesty will be featured.

Woolmarket Church, Biloxi, will host music evangelist Jasper Butler in its morning worship. A covered dish dinner on the grounds will follow the service, and Butler will present an afternoon concert. A love offering will

be taken. Billy Simmons is interim pastor.

The William Carey College Creative Scholars Center, under the direction of Read Diket, will host a creativity exploration workshop July 18-20 for children grades 2-12. Cost is \$80. Registration will be held at 8:30 a.m. July 19 in the Thomas Hall lobby of the Hattiesburg campus. For more information, call Diket at (601) 582-6205.

The 1995 Southern Christian Writers Conference workshop will be held June 9-10 at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. Sessions on writing and publishing poetry, books, and magazine articles will be geared for Christian and secular markets. Featured speakers will include: Charlie Warren, editor of *Home Life* magazine; Sandra Brooks, author of *Religious Writers Marketplace* directory; Ralph Hammond, poet laureate of Alabama; and novelists John Armistead of Tupelo and Peggy Darty. To register or for more information, contact coordinator Joanne Sloan, P.O. Box 1106, Northport, AL 35476; telephone (205) 333-8603.

Mississippi College will offer its 1995 American Studies Seminar on the American Colonies and the Revolutionary Era, June 6-July 7, 9:20-11 a.m. The seminar is a 3-graduate hour course geared for teachers. Fellowships are available. Call Ron Howard at (601) 925-3221 or the MC Graduate School at (601) 925-3225 for more information. MC will also offer **Bible 120: Introduction to the New Testament**, at the Delta Regional Medical Center in Greenville, this summer. Registration will be held June 5 in the medical center's first floor conference room at 6 p.m. Jon Doler, pastor of First Church, Leland, will teach the course. Contact Linda Gail Jones at (601) 925-3264 for more information.

Clarksdale Church, Clarksdale, recently received a four-octave Malmark handbell set in honor of Glenn D. and Hilda Pierce Gates. The bells were played April 24 in a dedication service by the Mississippi College Concert Ringers, directed by Carol Joy Sparkman. Carl White is Clarksdale pastor; Hugh Plunkett is minister of music.

Revival Dates

Friendship (Pike): May 28-June 2; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; speakers: James Messer, Sunday, both services; Bob Lynch, Mon.; Clark Stewart, Tues.; Mike Pennock, Wed.; Mike Alexander, Thurs.; Ted Bowlin, Fri.; Johnny Sykes, pastor.

West Laurel, Laurel: May 28-31; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; weekday services, noon and 7 p.m.; Richard P. Belcher, professor at Columbia International University, Columbia, S.C., speaker; Floyd M. Grice, Laurel, music; C.F. Worthington, pastor.

Shiloh (Carroll): May 28-31; Sunday, 11 a.m. followed by dinner on the grounds; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Gary Jackson, Sturgis, evangelist; Doug Warren, pastor, music.

Rock Branch, Union: June 4-9; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Ron Gilstrap, Newton, evangelist; Allyn Moore, Neshoba, music; Davie Guess, pastor.

Mt. Vernon, Eupora: June 25-28; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Archie England, Memphis, evangelist; Tony Faulk, pastor.

HMB schedules dedication of new building on June 21

ATLANTA (BP) — The Home Mission Board will host an open house and dedication ceremony for its new facility in Alpharetta, Ga., on June 21, during the June

20-22 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta.

Mt. Horeb celebrates centennial

Mt. Horeb Church, Collins, will celebrate its centennial June 4, beginning with fellowship at 10:30 a.m.

H.B. Merritt, former pastor, will lead the morning worship. Mrs. Paul Wade, wife of former pastor, will conduct the music.

A covered dish fellowship meal will follow the worship service. An afternoon service at 1:30 will include a time of remembrances from former pastors. The church will also bury a time capsule, which will be re-opened in 2045.

Johnny Beaver is pastor.

"Our trustees and staff are anxious to share this very special moment of the Home Mission Board's 150th anniversary with every Southern Baptist..." HMB President Larry Lewis said.

From 1-5 p.m., participants can take a self-guided tour of the five-story structure. A dedication ceremony is scheduled at 3 p.m.

Purchased in 1991 at a cost of \$1.3 million, the property is located in Alpharetta, an Atlanta suburb 25 miles north of downtown.

Maps to the building will be available at the HMB's exhibit in the Georgia World Congress Center during the Southern Baptist Convention.



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NASHVILLE (BP) — It's everything you ever wanted to know about the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting — including reports from all the denomination's agencies, what will be voted on, names of all the officers, and the constitution — and it is now available on SBCNet, the convention's data communications network.

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Fellowship, Mathiston: April 9-12; four professions of faith: Al Gaspard, Houston, evangelist; Tabatha Pollard, Mathiston, music; Ralph Cain, pastor.

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Concord, McCall Creek (Franklin): May 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; 1:15 p.m. singing following afternoon business meeting; no night services; Reese Kyzar, guest speaker; Before & After, guest singers; Tony Mullins, pastor.

Rock Hill, Brandon: May 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch, noon; afternoon fellowship; Vance Dyess, Star, guest speaker.

Antioch (Lawrence): May 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 10:45 a.m.; covered dish lunch, noon; 1:30 p.m. singing; Bert Lewis, former pastor, guest speaker; New Grace Singers, Franklin County, guest singers; Jackie Cooke, pastor.

Friendship (Lincoln): May 28; services, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; 1:15 p.m. service; Raymond Parker, Woodville, Texas, former pastor, guest speaker; Harold L. Smith, music; Wiley Reid, pastor.

County Line, Crystal Springs: May 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish dinner in fellowship hall; Don Payne, pastor, speaker; Pat Foreman, music.

Heucks Retreat, Brookhaven: May 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; Mike and Angela Britt, Tim Posey

music during 11 a.m. worship; dinner on the grounds; memorial service, gospel music with Obadi-ah, 1:30 p.m.; John G. McCall, former interim pastor, guest speaker.

Galilee (Copiah): May 28; services, 11 a.m.; lunch, noon; Kenneth Crosby, Brookhaven, guest speaker; Wayne McGee, Wesson, music; Chris Layton, pastor.

Calvary, Pricedale: June 4; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish dinner; note burning ceremony and musical program by Stan and Rosemary Collins, Hammond, La., 1 p.m.

New Hope, Coffeeville: June 4; 150th anniversary; 10:45 a.m.; covered dish on grounds; 1:30 p.m. singing; William McDaniel, Holcomb, guest speaker; Bob Koonce, Tupelo, guest singer; Frank Mixon, pastor.

Chester, Ackerman: June 4; 11 a.m.; covered dish dinner on the grounds; no night services; Ronnie Robinson, Jackson, guest speaker; David Grisham, pastor.

Center Hill, Hamilton: June 4; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship/memorial service, 11; covered dish dinner in fellowship hall; afternoon singing, 1:30; no night services; Norris Garner, guest speaker; Magnolia State Quartet and The Messengers, music; James M. Towery, pastor.

Names in the News

ATLANTA (BP) — Elmer Goble has been named director of religious services for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. Goble is a Home Mission Board volunteer specialist who directed Southern Baptist ministries during the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984. He will coordinate religious support for athletes and staff. In addition to scheduling religious services, Goble said he will be responsible for Bible studies, personal prayer rooms, and religious literature distribution.

David L. Patterson of Utica was recently licensed to the gospel ministry by New Zion Church, Crystal Springs. He is presently a deacon and Sunday School teacher at New Zion.

Sue Harpole has been named director of development for the Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation in Memphis. She was previously assistant vice chancellor for Student Financial Aid at the University of Tennessee, Memphis. Harpole attended Mississippi

State University in Starkville where she received a bachelor's degree in English education and a master's degree in counseling and student personnel.

W.C. Taylor Jr., member of Hardy Church (North Central) was recently nominated Christian country artist of the year by Gospel Voice's Diamond Awards, a division of Music City News. Taylor was also named 1995 Gold Cross country gospel male vocalist by the International Country Gospel Music Association.

J. Larry Cox of Greenwood has been named an associate to the area director in Europe for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. From a base in Wiesbaden, Germany, Cox, 46, will be responsible for missionary work encompassing nations from Scandinavia



Cox

to the Mediterranean. He was most recently a strategy coordinator in northern Africa and central Asia for Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist aid agency. Prior to that assignment, he was employed at Mississippi College, Clinton. He married his wife, the former Cheryl Keathley from Memphis, in 1969. They have four children.

Ann McKay Wilson of Jackson has been awarded a presidential scholarship to attend Mississippi College beginning this fall. Wilson is a senior at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Jackson, and is a member of the national Honor Society and St. Andrew's Thespian Society. She is also an active participant in volleyball and basketball and as a freshman was selected for an academic achievement award.

Tom Lester of Laurel (who portrayed the character "Ebb" on the television series "Green Acres") will speak at Mt. Vernon Church in Webster County on June 4 at 10:30 a.m. Tony Faulk is pastor.

Baldwyn's FBC marks 125th year

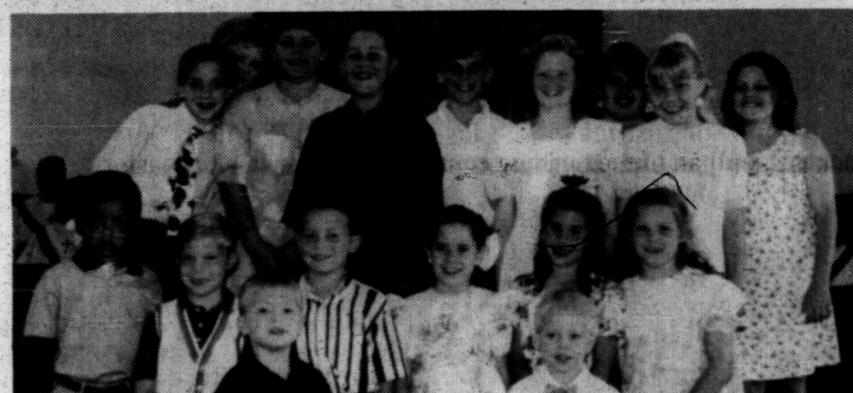
First Church, Baldwyn, will celebrate its 125th anniversary on Sunday, June 4, at 2 p.m.

The church invites all former members and pastors to join the celebration.

Leo Barker, former pastor, will preach the celebration sermon.

For more information, call the church at (601) 365-5201. Terry Cutrer is pastor.

Mission Offerings Reports



Harrisville Church, Harrisville, set a goal of \$600 and its children (above) raised \$550 for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions. The church went over its goal and raised \$1,000.

Walnut Grove Church (Leake Association) exceeded its \$1,850 goal for gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for

Home Missions. The church collected a total of \$1,862. John H. Pace Jr. is pastor.

Hepzibah Church, Lawrence County, doubled its Annie Armstrong Offering goal of \$500. The final offering received was \$1,001.56. Paul Wilbourn is pastor and Lois Hedgepeth is WMU director.

Woolmarket Church, Biloxi, received \$2,100.73, exceeding its goal of \$2,000 for the Annie Armstrong Offering. The GAs under the leadership of Julie Lewis and Sue Hartman participated in the effort and collected \$44.80 toward the church goal.

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Land: Modern medical research is manifestation of man's revolt

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — Calling research in the area of human genetics the "technological equivalent of the Tower of Babel," Richard Land told graduates at Southeastern Seminary May 12 that America is in the midst of a "full-scale revolt against the deity of God."

"I cannot think of a time in the history of the American nation when we have been at a more critical juncture — and we haven't seen anything yet," said Land, president of the Christian Life Commission.

Attempts to patent the discovery of genetic codes and the formation of new human and life forms by U.S. companies are evidence we are "literally in a realized-walking-talking version of Aldous Huxley's 'Brave New World,'" said Land, in remarks during the spring baccalaureate service on Southeastern's Wake Forest, N.C., campus.

"If there was ever a time that God has sent watchmen to stand watch on the walls — to sound the alarm — it is now," Land continued, encouraging the graduates to stand by their convictions even when they are standing alone.

"When you are God's man, there are times when no one understands. That is why the Bible tells us we do not have a high priest who can't be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He was tempted in all ways like as we are; yet he was without sin."

Likening it to Jesus' experience in the Garden of Gethsemane, Land said, "When you're on your face in prayer and everybody else is asleep and has turned their back on you and no one understands — he understands. And it makes all the

difference in the world when he kneels to lift you up — for he does it with a nail-scarred hand. He understands. He's been there."

The church must call the nation to return to the old paths and stand in the right ways according to Scripture, Land said, bemoaning the spiral of sin that is dragging unrepentant man downward.

"In the first chapter of the Book of Romans, Paul writes of the downward spiral of sin: The only thing that is perhaps more awesome about sin than its consequences is its ability to beget ever more heinous sin," Land said.

Borrowing from the words of the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, Land said of mankind in the late 20th century: "They have no shame at all; they have lost their ability to blush." Science seeks to create life not only in man's image but in some new image, Land said, "shaping living idols for his own whim according to his finite ideas of perfection and beauty and utility."

"It is not that we no longer believe in God. It is not that we no longer want to rebel against God. It's that we want to be God!" Land thundered.

Christians meet to "reclaim America"

By Sarah Peugh

A recent convocation of Americans gathered in Florida to "Reclaim America for Christ."

Meeting at the Fort Lauderdale Convention Center, 800 men and women of all races, colors, and creeds heard such topics discussed as America's true Christian heritage; pro-family update; the battle for religious liberty; the welfare system; and others. Conventioners were urged to restore America to its godly heritage.

While the "gay agenda" was being countered at the podium, 1,000 homosexuals marched and chanted outside against a fortress of mounted Fort Lauderdale police officers.

D. James Kennedy, pastor of host Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, stated, "It's time to reclaim America for Christ and I say that without apology," adding, "Christ loves sinners, but hates sin."

Kennedy stated that the "gay" movement is making astonishing inroads into American culture with greater and greater success.

"Sexual behavior is not a special privilege. I pray America will turn back to God and be fully restored," he said.

Tim Philpot, serving a second term in the Kentucky Senate, declared he was under mandate like the prophet Ezekiel, a Jewish exile from Judah in the Old Testament whom God told, "Stand upon thy feet and speak to a rebellious nation who has transgressed against me. Whether they hear or not, do not be afraid."

Philpot spoke about cultural trends of female infanticide in India, abortion on demand in America, homosexuals in the armed services, parental violence to offspring, and violence and crime on television that reflect a direct influence on schools and society.

Cal Thomas, nationally-syndicated columnist and CNBC cable network talk show host, talked about scientific evidence for the objective idea of God, truth, and credibility.

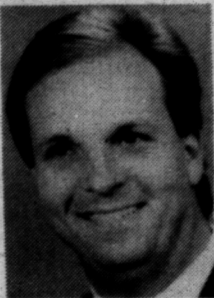
Alan Keyes, Harvard University graduate and candidate for U.S. president, talked about why people think it is strange to speak on bringing out the name and will of God in public policy.

Citing "skyrocketing crime increasing in our school halls, abortion on demand, demoralization of the foundation of justice, welfare reform caused by decline of morals, declining quality of education because of moral factors," Keyes concluded with, "When our country was founded, freedom was a right and duty."

Peugh is a member of First Church, Aberdeen.

Staff Changes

First Church, Ridgeland, has called **Tony Byrd** as pastor effective May 14. His previous place of service was Rock Hill Church, Inman, S. C., where he served as minister to students. He received his education from New Orleans Seminary. Before entering the pastoral field, he was a science teacher and basketball coach in Georgia.



Charles Nail of Hopkinsville, Ky., assumed his duties on May 14 as pastor of **Elam Church, Coffeeville**. He is a native of Grenada County.

Neely Church, Greene Association has called **Cliff Hardin** of Clinton as summer minister of youth. He is a native of Leakesville. Hardin is a student at Mississippi College.



Village hosts conference

The Mississippi Baptist Children's Village (MBCV) hosted the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Child Care Agency Public Relations and Development Conference May 7-9 on the India Nunnery campus in Jackson. Dinner and entertainment were provided for conference participants at the Agriculture and Forestry Museum in Jackson (above). Henry Glaze, MBCV director of programs, was elected president of the group while Chrystelle Thames, MBCV director of public relations, was elected secretary.

SWBTS awards degrees to nine Mississippians

FORT WORTH — Nine people from Mississippi were among degree recipients during Southwestern Seminary's spring commencement ceremonies May 12.

Earning the master of arts in religious education degree were: Christy K. Bradshaw of Alta Woods Church, Jackson (she also earned the master of arts in marriage and family counseling); Courtney S. Cash of Fairview Church, Columbus; Katherine Evans of Colonial Heights Church, Jackson; Dennis M. Hydrick Jr. of Pilgrim's Rest Church, Crystal Springs (he also earned the master of arts in marriage and family

counseling); Clayton Ledbetter of Tupelo; and Marty J. Pittman of Ingalls Avenue Church, Pascagoula.

Receiving the master of divinity with biblical languages were: Richard L. Allen of Michael Memorial Church, Gulfport; and John Mark Wood of Biloxi.

Michelle Williams Strickland of First Church, Starkville, received the master of divinity degree.

President Ken Hemphill awarded a total of 480 diplomas in Southwestern's schools of theology, religious education, and church music.

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By Greg Potts
1 Corinthians 13

In one of the greatest chapters in all the Bible, the apostle Paul exhorts the Corinthians to understand the greatest thing in all the world — love. In the preceding chapter, Paul gives a lengthy discussion on spiritual gifts. The Corinthians were proud of the spiritual gifts they had received and flaunted them for the church and community to see.

However, in their attempt to please the Lord with what they felt were their superior spiritual gifts, they had forgotten that they should serve the Lord from a heart of love. As Paul closes chapter 12 he says "And I show you a still more excellent way." Paul seeks to build a bridge from his discussion on spiritual gifts to a discussion on the one thing in all the world that is far greater than any spiritual gift a Christian may have. That is love.

Love is not a spiritual gift. It is listed among the fruits of the spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Therefore, every Christian can and should exercise love — love for Christ, for his church, and his fellow-man.

The preeminence of love (vv. 1-3). Paul lists five different gifts of the spirit that he says are worthless without love. He mentions the gifts of speaking, prophecy, faith, miracles, and charity. Paul says that if one possesses each of these gifts but has not love, these gifts are useless. Love is more important than any spiritual gift.

The purpose of love (vv. 4-7). Paul uses some 15 adjectives in these four verses to describe for us what love is all about. These verses have been read at many wedding ceremonies over the years as two young Christian people stand gazing at one another and pledging their love to each other. He discusses what our lives are like in:

A. The presence of love. Again, Paul lists these as fruits of the spirit. These are not spiritual gifts which are given to some and not others but are available to all Christians as they allow the Holy Spirit to work in their life.

B. The absence of love. Paul lists seven things love avoids doing. In essence, love is not being selfish or stepping on someone on the climb to the top. Love is caring for people. That's what Jesus did. He always put people first. He was compassionate and kind.

C. The continuation. Paul says love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love is what leads a parent to continue to give their wayward child a chance. Love is what leads a pastor to bite his tongue when a church member says something that is not true. Love is what leads a husband or wife to overlook mistakes made by his or her spouse.

The permanence of love (vv. 8-13). Paul begins this third section with the words "love never fails." How true! The three gifts the Corinthians felt were important (prophecy, tongues, knowledge) would all be done away, but love would last.

Paul closes with the familiar "But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

There is an old hymn we sing that says, "Of the themes that men have known, love supremely stands alone; Through the ages it has shown, 'twas His wonderful, wonderful love. Love is the theme, love is supreme; sweeter it grows, glory bestows, bright as the sun, ever it glows, love is the theme, eternal theme."

The "love chapter" stands as a mountaintop in Scripture. One man said "It is the deepest, strongest thing Paul ever wrote." Love is the most excellent way!

During World War II, some American soldiers took the body of their buddy to a local cemetery. The priest stopped them saying "You can't bury your friend here if he is not Catholic." Discouraged but not defeated, the boys buried their fellow soldier just outside the cemetery fence. When they came to pay their respects the next morning, they could not find the grave. They questioned the priest about it, and he said, "The first part of the night I stayed awake disturbed by what I had told you. The second part of the night I spent moving the fences." That is love. That is what Jesus did on Calvary. He showed us the most excellent way.

Potts is pastor, First Church, Vancleave.

Bible Book Demands of discipleship



By Sylvia Fleming
Mark 9, 10

On the way to Capernaum, the disciples had been arguing about which one of them was the greatest. Their behavior was so human and child-like that Jesus gathered them to himself and began to greatly instruct them. For one to have preeminence over others, he must be willing to serve and put himself last. Jesus then took a child, put his arms around the child, and told the disciples that if they would accept that child in his name they would receive him. Those who received Jesus were not only receiving him, but were receiving the Father who sent him. It is necessary to come to Jesus in a humble, child-like manner.

As Jesus continued in Judea, a rich young ruler approached and asked the "Good Master" how he might inherit eternal life. Jesus then questioned the young man about why he called Jesus "good." Jesus pointed out that no one was good, except God; therefore, if Jesus were good, then he was God. Jesus then acknowledged that the man knew the commandments. Jesus pointed him to the commandments to give him a picture of himself in his sinful condition. Commandments will not save anyone any more than a mirror will wash a dirty face. The mirror simply shows one that he needs to be washed. It is possible to know all of the commandments, but it is not possible to keep all of them. Though the young man told Jesus that he had always kept the commandments, Jesus presented no argument; but told him to go and sell what he had, give it to the poor, give up his own will, and follow the will of God.

If the young man had done as Jesus instructed, he would have had treasures stored up for him in heaven. However, he sadly left and kept his worldly possessions. It was not that he was rich and that he refused to share with the poor that condemned the young man to a devil's hell. His condemnation came with his disobedience to the Son of God. People who claim to know Jesus Christ, but refuse to obey him as their Lord are mistaken. They cannot divide Jesus into little bits and pieces, accept the salvation part, and refuse his lordship over their lives. He is Lord and Savior. He does not come *a la carte*.

On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus had been telling the disciples what would happen to him. Apparently, some of the disciples still had the former argument on their minds about who the greatest one was, because James and John approached Jesus with a particular request. Having no conception of the cross and its meaning, they asked Jesus that he grant them any request they might have. Before giving them an answer, Jesus asked what they wanted. They apparently had decided they were the greatest of the apostles; consequently, they wanted to sit one at Jesus' right and the other at his left. They thought the kingdom was about to be set up; therefore, they were ready to be his co-regents.

Jesus then told them that they had no conception of the consequences of their requests. Could they drink of his cup and participate in his baptism? Jesus went on to tell them that indeed they would drink of his cup and be baptized with his baptism. They had no idea of the devastation, humiliation, and danger that they would later suffer. Later, Herod would kill James; and John would one day be exiled to the Isle of Patmos (Acts 12:2; Rev. 1:9), all for the name of Jesus.

Though they would suffer for Jesus' sake, he could not place them at his sides. That act was reserved only for the Father whose will Jesus came to do. Jesus came only as the God-man — the Mediator and Redeemer — and not to do his own will.

Jesus saw trouble in the ranks of the ones to whom he was about to leave his work. The other 10 got angry when they realized James and John were seeking preferential treatment; therefore, Jesus had further instructions for them: Those who are the greater servants on earth will receive greater honor in heaven. "... Whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister. And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (10:43-44).

While on earth, no one ministered unto Jesus. He was the minister; he served others. Those who are Christ-like shall follow in his footsteps. It is not a wide road to travel, but straight and narrow is the way that leads to eternal life (Matt. 7:13; Luke 13:24).

Fleming is an English teacher and member of Harmony Church, Louisville.

Life and Work Challenging our culture



By Michael Johnson
Acts 19

Are our churches relevant to the needs of people today? Not according to recent studies and surveys. A George Barna survey found that 90% of all Americans would like to know more about God, but 62% of those who don't attend worship services think the church isn't relevant to society and 91% of non-Christians believe that Protestant churches are not sensitive to their needs.

Consider these other statistics: 98% of U.S. churches have less than 300 in attendance on any Sunday morning; 85% of those churches are plateaued or declining; and while 2,000 new churches are started each year over 6,000 shut down permanently. Our study this week provides some guidance in responding to these disturbing trends.

Challenging religious beliefs (vv. 8-9). Paul is in the synagogue boldly proclaiming the kingdom of God that had been inaugurated with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There were some within the synagogue who were stubborn and willfully rejected the truth of Paul's preaching. It therefore seemed best to Paul to take his preaching outside of the synagogue — not to withdraw from the Jews, but so he could reach both the Jews and Greeks.

Each Sunday we find faithful pastors proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. The focus of that preaching, however, should be more than to convict of sin. Inherent in the proclamation is the reality of God's rule over all of life. The call to conversion, while essential, is but the first step. Our churches are full of Christians who have yet to realize the larger obligations of following the "Way" (name given to early followers of Christ; see John 14:6). The religious professional therefore has a sacred task in not only proclaiming the word but to equip the converts with the skills needed to make the gospel relevant in lives at home and in the marketplace.

If we are truly serious about transforming the culture, then we must become equally serious about the message we proclaim and follow.

Challenging evils in the culture (vv. 19-20). This section detailing Paul's ministry in Ephesus is impressive indeed. The Holy Spirit was moving throughout the city, confronting entrenched evil practices. One commentator points out that Ephesus was a gathering place for merchants, magic workers, and astrologers, as well as criminals of all types. Apparently there was a custom that if a person could reach the precincts of the Temple of Artemis, they were given asylum in the city. One could assume that every imaginable sort of social misfit could be found within the city limits.

What is most interesting in this passage is that those who are confessing and bringing their books to the bonfire are those who first accepted Christ as their Lord. How often do we confront people with their sin without first introducing them to the power of Christ that is so necessary for sin to be overcome?

Yes, we sometimes are faced with situations in which sin must be openly and forthrightly confronted. All too often our actions toward the unchurched are so loud that the lost cannot hear what we have to say about Christ! Behavior follows belief — not vice versa.

Challenging vested interests (vv. 23-27). It is clear that Paul was successful in his preaching in Ephesus. People came to the city to worship at the Temple of Artemis and would often pick up a replica of the goddess to commemorate their visit. But souvenir sales were off and the merchants, led by a man named Demetrius, were upset. Paul and his companions were convincing people of their need for Jesus instead of Artemis.

Lloyd Ogilvie points out in 3 John 12 a Demetrius who is identified as a convert who shares a "good testimony." It may not be beyond the realm of possibility that Demetrius later came in contact with Paul and became a Christian. The story in chapter 19 is a story of the gospel capturing a city. Let us all go forward with the conviction that the gospel is just as powerful today as it was then. What might happen if we challenge today's culture with the gospel?

Johnson is associate professor of Christian education at Mississippi College, Clinton.

capsules

OKLAHOMA CITY RELIEF FUND TOPS \$260,000: OKLAHOMA CITY (BP) — Baptists across Oklahoma and around the world have responded to the needs of the Oklahoma City bombing victims by providing more than \$260,000 in relief funds. The relief fund was set up by the General Convention of Oklahoma to help with funeral expenses, hospital costs, or related expenses in the wake of the April 19 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. A total of 166 people died in the explosion that damaged more than 200 buildings and left an additional 400 people injured. Also, a rescue worker died after being hit by falling debris. Charles Graves, president of the General Convention of Oklahoma, and William G. Tanner, executive director-treasurer, said they were not surprised Oklahoma Baptists responded to people in a crisis situation, but were taken aback at the amount given. By Friday afternoon May 5, donations totalled \$263,530.08. "I'm just greatly impressed," said Graves, pastor of Quail Springs Church in Oklahoma City. "I'm not really surprised, because I see in Southern Baptists in Oklahoma a great spirit in any crisis. I just expect Baptists to do well.... Thank you is too small. I don't have the words to express thanks for the great kindness Baptists have shown."

SOUTHWESTERN V.P. ACCEPTS LOCKMAN FOUNDATION POST: FORT WORTH (BP) — Jay P. Chance, vice president for institutional advancement at Southwestern Seminary, has announced his departure from the seminary to take the position of vice president of The Lockman Foundation. The purpose of the Lockman Foundation, based in La Habra, Calif., is to translate and disseminate the Scriptures. The most notable translation of The Foundation is the New American Standard Bible. Before coming to Southwestern, Chance served as vice president for public affairs at California Baptist College in Riverside from 1980-90. He has also served as assistant director of the Southern Rural Development Center at Mississippi State University in Starkville; and as supervisor and instructor at East Mississippi Junior College in Scooba.

HONG KONG BAPTIST PRESS RETIRED EDITOR WONG DIES: FORT WORTH (BP) — Molly Wong, retired editor of the Hong Kong Baptist Press and a graduate of Southwestern Seminary, died May 2 after a year-long battle with lung cancer. She was 74. Wong was well-known for her book, *They Changed My China*, an autobiography about her escape from China following the communist takeover. A 1951 graduate of the University of Shanghai, China, Wong was persecuted for her Christian faith prior to her escape from the country when the government came under communist rule. Directly following her graduation from Hong Kong Baptist Seminary, she became editor of the Hong Kong Baptist Press, a news service and Christian literature distributor, in 1960. Wong enrolled at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth in 1967 and graduated in 1969. She returned to work for Hong Kong Baptist Press until her retirement in 1990. Following her retirement, Wong spent her final years editing for the compilation of the New Chinese Bible as well as translating Sunday School materials into Chinese. In addition to her journalistic activities, Wong was active in her local church in Hong Kong as pianist until 1990. Funeral services for Wong were held May 6 in Kowloon, Hong Kong, with burial following in Hong Kong.

WEST VIRGINIA BAPTISTS ELECT PHILLIPS AS NEW EXEC: BECKLEY, W.Va. (BP) — The West Virginia Convention executive board has unanimously elected Jere L. Phillips as the convention's executive director-treasurer. Phillips, 43, director of the Tennessee Convention's Missions Department since 1990, succeeds Don R. Mathis, who held the position two years, leaving in February 1994 to become pastor of Central Church, Winchester, Ky. The board affirmed the recommendation of its search committee in a meeting in Beckley, W.Va., April 29. Phillips, a native of Dyersburg, Tenn., is a graduate of Union University, Jackson, Tenn., and New Orleans Seminary. He has been pastor in Tennessee, Louisiana, and Florida, and was a professor and department chair in the church ministries division of Trinity College, Dunedin, Fla., from 1984-87. He has been a frequent contributor to Southern Baptist publications.

BAPTISTS IN ARMENIA ARRESTED FOLLOWING EASTER SERVICES: YEREVAN, Armenia (ABP) — Members of Yerevan Baptist Church in Armenia were arrested and held several hours following Easter services April 23, according to European Baptist Press Service. Twenty people in military uniforms arrested the Baptists. Among those arrested was Yuri Avanesian, president of the Baptist Union of Armenia. The Baptists were held several hours in a military office and released. Few details are known, but the crackdown was carried out by the Armenian military and targeted only Protestant churches, wrote Gregory Komendant, president of the Euro-Asiatic Federation of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, and Yuri Apatov, executive secretary of the Baptist Union of Russia, in a letter to European Baptist leaders. Armenian authorities have promised to investigate the incident. It is unclear who gave the order for the arrests. It is also unclear if church documents and an automobile confiscated at the time of the arrests were returned when the prisoners were released.

Itawamba BSU'ers help mission center with outreach, renovation

By Wayne Vandiver



Itawamba Community College Baptist Student Union members who participated in a spring break mission trip to Savannah, Ga. are (left to right): front, Dallas Vandiver, Danielle Murphy, Shannon White, Landis McBride, Carla Williams; back, Angie Turnage, Jason Snipes, Melvin Falkner, Bryan Comer, and Troy Comer.

Spring break is always an exciting time for Baptist Student Union (BSU) members at the Itawamba Community College (ICC) in Fulton. The ICC BSU sponsors an annual spring break mission effort to places such as its 1995 destination, Savannah, Ga.

A group of 11 BSU members traveled to Savannah to help the Baptist Mission Center there conduct social ministries, children's activities, and evangelism, as well as building maintenance and painting. Some students also helped size and sort clothing for the center's clothes closet. Others prepared food for distribution within the low-income neighborhood surrounding the center.

A racially-mixed mission congregation which worships at the center is led by Pastor Dagogo Benson-Jaja, originally from Nigeria. The BSU volunteers participated in worship services with Benson-Jaja, taught Sunday School, and shared their faith with people in a downtown tourist area.

"The experiences that stay in my mind the most," said Landis McBride of Baldwin, "are the times that people rejected what we were trying to tell them. Their words and their facial expressions keep flashing over and over in my mind from when they mocked and cursed Jesus, or us, for telling them about him."

"My heart aches for these people because they are so deceived and have no idea of what they are

rejecting when they reject Christ.

"The precious moments when I saw someone accept Christ never leave me either," said McBride.

The students were able to witness during the Savannah St. Patrick's Day parade, the second largest such parade in the United States.

Melvin Falkner of Pontotoc said, "The most interesting part of the trip to Savannah was when we went witnessing and I was able, by the grace of God, to share Jesus with this man and watch him accept Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior. The whole trip gave me a little touch of what it is like

to be a missionary."

Troy Comer, a student from Fulton, said, "I'm no Billy Graham; but after (witnessing on) River Street (downtown), I am a stronger Christian and will try to live my life the way God would want me to live it."

Churches of Chickasaw, Itawamba, Lee, Monroe, and Pontotoc associations support the Itawamba Community College BSU and help make mission trips like the one to Savannah possible.

Vandiver has led spring break mission efforts for 11 years as director of the Baptist Student Union at ICC.

Gallup: Religion seen as losing impact

PRINCETON, N.J. (ABP) — Most Americans believe religion is losing its influence in public life but still consider it relevant to solving life's problems, according to pollster George Gallup.

Opinions about religion's impact in America have changed dramatically over the years, but the sense that religion remains relevant to contemporary problems "has been remarkably constant" over the last 20 years, Gallup said.

A number of studies in the 1990s show that two out of three Americans believe religion is losing influence, Gallup said. As recently as 1990, only 48% believed religion's influence was waning, while 33%

said it was on an upswing.

However, 62% of Americans believe religion can answer all or most of today's problems, a level of response that has shown "no significant change over the past 20 years," he said.

Two generations ago, in 1957, Gallup said, 69% of the populace thought religion was in an upswing, while only 14% said it was losing ground. Religion, along with other institutions, took a hit during the Vietnam era, he added. In 1970, 75% felt religion was rapidly losing influence, he said.

Changes in opinion about religion's influence can change rapidly, Gallup said. Most young adults

under 30 — 80% — believe religion is losing influence. A third of adults aged 30-49, meanwhile, believe religion is gaining momentum. People in that age group are most active in church, because they bring children to receive religious education, Gallup observed.

The Gallup organization findings are based on telephone interviews with a representative national sample of 3,040 men and women conducted throughout 1994.

Bibliocipher

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HB UBI ASFWYFI GWX RX VRH BDX RGWUF, RX
YVF RGWUF BE UBI ASFWYFI VF VRG; GWKF WXI
EFGWKF ASFWYFI VF YVFG.

UFXFHRH BXF: YDFXYL-HFZFX

This week's clue: X equals N:

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Proverbs Twenty-Two: Two.

Baptist Record

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